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ABSTRACT

This paper examines a random sample of applicants (n=203) accepted to the Faculty of Education, University of Toronto (Canada), and addresses the following questions: (1) what new teachers say about their reasons for entering the profession; (2) how those reasons align with current thinking about the qualities of teachers necessary to a changing profession; (3) whether their reasons differ by self-selected level of elementary, junior, or senior high school; and (4) what analysis of these statements suggests to program designers for the education of new teachers. The following themes emerge across all levels: (1) the need to make a difference to students and society; (2) teachers as role models for students; (3) the teacher-student exchange as one of mutual growth and continuous learning for both; (4) a wish to share personal knowledge and expertise; and (5) the creation of a positive learning environment. Beginning teachers appear to be optimistic and interested in making a difference to themselves, their students, and society. Teacher educators should strive to maintain these high levels of energy and idealism; focus on abilities that address the needs of a changing society, and assist beginning teachers to become effective agents of change. (LL)

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WHY WE WANT TO BE TEACHERS: NEW TEACHERS TALK ABOUT THEIR REASONS FOR ENTERING THE PROFESSION

by

Suzanne Stiegelbauer

Paper presented at the

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WHY WE WANT TO BE TEACHERS: NEW TEACHERS TALK ABOUT THEIR REASONS FOR ENTERING THE PROFESSION[1]

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> Teaching is a vocation, a calling. It is difficult to avoid precisely for the sense of responsibility and commitment that it evokes (J/I).
>
> The role currently ascribed to teachers is a complex and multifaceted one. Teaching affords one the opportunity to work directly with children addressing the academic needs of the child and also facilitating the development of positive self-esteem, good socialization skills, and a sense of self-efficacy. Thus no other profession enables one the opportunity to provide such a positive impact on a child's overall development. Given the changing nature of society with respect to such issues as family stability and the resultant impact on children, the role of the teacher is certainly a challenging one (P/J).
>
> I want to make a difference to students and the future (P/J).

Overview

Over the last decade there has been much discussion as to the teacher qualities and abilities necessary to the revitalization of educational systems and student learning. The Carnegie and Holmes groups (both 1986) as well as more recently, Goodlad and colleagues (1990), all describe the need for new teachers to be: educated persons of the community, models of deportment and character, confident of the ability of all to learn, capable of setting goals that maximize the learning of all students, able to adjust programs to address changing needs of students, schools and even perhaps, those of a changing world (Goodlad, 1990). All of this is a big agenda for beginning teachers but also for the universities selecting and training those entering the profession.

This paper examines one such group: a random sample of the applications of individuals accepted to the Faculty of Education, University of Toronto, for the 1991-1992 academic year.. In doing so, the paper asks the following questions:

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[1]. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Meetings (AERA), San Francisco, April, 1992. The opinions presented are those of the author alone.

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1) What do new teachers say about their reasons for entering the profession?

2) How do those reasons align with the current thinking about the qualities of teachers necessary to a changing profession?

3) Do their reasons differ by self-selected level--elementary, junior, or senior high school?

4) What does analysis of these statement suggest to program design for the education of new teachers?

Answers to these questions are presented from the perspective of applicant responses to "why I want to be a teacher" and through the development of theme groups of responses according to program areas. The discussion and table to follow present some of the major themes to emerge from a content analysis of the data. The statements of these teachers in themselves eloquently describe many of the goals mentioned by Goodlad and others but also provide insight into why people choose to enter the teaching profession itself.

In conclusion, the statements are viewed from another perspective. One of the most powerful rationales for teaching in a post-modern society, with its diversity and rapidity of change, involves the concept of "moral purpose" as described by Goodlad (1990: 47): "we came to see with increasing clarity the degree to which teaching in schools, public or private, carries with it moral imperatives--more in public schools, however, because they are not schools of choice in a system requiring compulsory schooling." This idea of moral purpose requires special attributes of teachers--not only a sense of caring but also in personal capacity for action, or "change agentry" as Michael Fullan calls it (Fullan, 1992), action even in the face of seeming chaos. In reviewing the statements of this set of beginning teachers, these themes--moral purpose and capacity for action, or change agentry--are further defined in the light of teacher comments.

Methodology

The University of Toronto Faculty of Education receives approximately 8,000 applicants from across Canada yearly. Out of these, 1,000 are selected for entrance to the post baccalaureate fifth year program which results in certification after one year. The acceptances represent a particularly select group given the demand to enter teaching in

Ontario. In admission, a combination of factors are weighted equally--academic grades, and an applicant "profile' designed to capture experience and reasons for entering teaching. Because of the emphasis on experience, the average age of the student body is 29 but includes students from the age of 22 to 50. With the exception of special cases where life experience is counted higher, as in the case of mature students, most of the acceptances have academic averages above a "B" in their previous university work.

This paper represents comments from a 20% random sample of the acceptances divided by program area--primary-junior (P/J, grades K - 6), Junior- intermediate (J/I, grades 4-9), and Intermediate-senior (I/S, grades 9-13). A 20% sample of responses in each category therefore equals 57 in P/J, 51 in J/I and 95 in I/S. The total included in this review was 203 applications. On the application form, applicants are asked to complete general biographical data--age, gender, country of origin--as well as to list any experiences they had had related to teaching, such as teacher aide, scouts, supply teaching in some form, etc. with the names of references for those experiences. Applicants are also asked to respond to the question: "why do you want to be a teacher?" elaborating on that answer through other questions included in the application ("what experience had the most impact on you? What other experiences do you think are important to mention?"). To do the content analysis of answers, responses to all questions on the application were used to support and provide background for why they want to be teachers.

In developing the themes common to each program, responses are presented in order of frequency of mention, i.e. the first response or theme described under each program is the one most commonly discussed in one way or another; the next one is of slightly less frequent mention and so on. Occasionally themes overlapped, but as much as possible they are presented as separate. The goal of analyzing themes according to program area is to examine the differences in the comments of applicants to each program and what those differences reveal about why applicants are interested in different levels as well as what they suggest to program development within the area. Figure 1 outlines the response themes of applicants to each of the program levels in order of mention. The following text describes these themes by program in more detail. Themes are presented in order of frequency of mention:

Primary/Junior Responses

> I want to make a difference. I would like to be able to help young children discover how to learn and to help build their self-esteem and confidence so that they are able to grow, mature and question things around them. For myself, I could not see any more rewarding or meaningful profession.
>
> Teaching is a career that makes a positive contribution to community and society. Out children are the future and it is our responsibility to provide them with the educational framework within which they can acquire the skills and values that they will carry with them in their future endevours.
>
> Education is a whole experience. The purpose of education is to equip each person with the knowledge and skills for service to society. I want growing children to become conscious of the fact that they have the ability and freedom to change things, not only for themselves but especially for others.
>
> Learning is not a means to oppress or impress others, but instead is a process whereby individuals extend their relatedness, their connectedness to themselves, others and the world.
>
> I have learned in my experiences that successful teaching and learning must be genuinely shared; that children can be remarkable and inventive problem solvers, that the physical setting is important to the interest aroused and the possibilities perceived by the child. There is a creative bond in the dialogue between the teacher and the student.
>
> Both teachers and students are learners. It is a reciprocal relationship that offers endless opportunities for growth. Teaching is a cooperative endevour.

Primary/junior applicants as a group are characterized by a larger number of young females (46 females to 11 males) and by less diversity of background (ethnic, country of origin, former professions) than the other program groups. (As a matter of note, the total number of males and females accepted in P/J is 67 males and 253 females.) P/J applicants also include more individuals with specific experience with the handicapped, hospitals, special education and special needs populations as well as more mention of church and community aid experience.

What is unique about this primary group as compared to the other program groups is their background in the "helping" professions and their emphasis on "caring." They relate a number of church related experience--sunday school, church youth camps, etc., or civic experience, such as girl guides and coaching. They convey an image of coming from a more traditional community background where these kinds of activities are integrated into everyday life. This image is stronger in the primary applicants than in any other program group, though such activities are mentioned in the other program samples.

I want to make a difference: By far the most frequent theme in the responses to why I want to be a teacher was that of "caring" and "wanting to make a difference." These applicants expressed goals related to their sense of responsibility for laying the groundwork for young students so that their later years in school and in society will be more successful. They see working with young students as a way to contribute to the development of a positive future for society and the individuals they teach and derive satisfaction from working toward that goal: "I believe being a teacher is one of the most important professions in our society. We teach students to strive for what they want and for what they believe in." "I found myself wishing that I could be in the same school everyday, working with the same children, being a part of a child's whole school experience. This allows me greater use of my expertise to benefit students and furthers my own satisfaction in a sense of accomplishment."

Teaching allows for mutual growth and continuous learning for student and teacher: The second theme in frequency of mention involves the fact that students are active participants in the learning process; that learning is a reciprocal process where the teacher gains as much as the child and where they work together to build the educational experience: "teachers are part of a team sharing ideas. Teaching and education is a continuous process of growth and development filled with constant change for both the student and the teacher." "Learning is about understanding yourself and the world around you. Through my interaction with the students, I hope to learn and grow to be a more complete person myself. any experience which helps to enhance this growth is significant."

Teachers must provide a safe, stimulating learning environment that fosters student self-esteem: This theme is followed by two others that describe what teachers do: they develop ways to facilitate the self-esteem and flexibility of students within a changing society; they provide students with opportunities to succeed; they guide students; they help students develop respect for diversity and they do this through the provision of a safe, positive, stimulating learning environment: "Teachers are the facilitators of classrooms which encourage freedom of thought and independence and allow students to think and act creatively and build healthy attitudes." "I believe the essence of the classroom teacher is to provide an environment that is conducive to learning in that it facilitates growth, stimulates and challenges the intellect and recognizes the gifts and needs of the individual while at the same time promoting within the group a cohesion built on mutual respect and a sense of common purpose."

Teachers are important models to students: The next two themes are common to applicants in all programs--they involve the importance of teachers as models of good character in today's society and the influence of their own teachers as models to them in the past. They also describe the variety of roles common to the teacher today: "Teaching means providing those around you with a continuous example of leadership, social adroitness and moral fortitude. Teachers are faced day by day and year after year with an ever shifting assembly of children to whom they must not only present the fundamentals of the curriculum but also instill in them co-operation, respect for others and confidence in themselves." "The role of a teacher goes beyond facilitating learning to disciplinarian, social worker, substitute parent and friend, a model of positive and acceptable behaviours, actions and attitudes." "I have had experience with models of good teachers in my own life. Individuals who showed empathy, emotional support and respect for development, self-esteem and communication skills. These people made a difference to me. I would like to have the same impression on my students." A number of applicants mentioned that they came from families where one or both parents were teachers.

The primary years are important to setting attitudes to learning and to others in the world: Applicants next describe interest in the primary years due to its importance in developing the aptitudes and conditions needed for learning in the future, especially as it related to developing skills needed to responsible citizenship. According to these applicants, the primary years are developmentally the most important time in a child's life; a time where children develop a positive attitude to school life and learning; develop base-line knowledge and skills; develop foundational self-esteem; develop an understanding of responsibility and a respect for differences: " If the child loves to learn early in life it will influence what future motivation he has. Successful early experience in school is essential." "The primary years lay the foundation for the rest." "All students in this multicultural society should be able to fulfill their potential. The role of the teacher in the 90's is one that supports and pursues an understanding of multicultural differences."

I believe I have something to offer: Finally, applicants described some of their own motivations for becoming a teacher and described what they saw as the qualities of teachers and teaching: "I want to share the knowledge and experience I have gained. A teaching career would be the culmination of all the experience which I have attained and all that I have learned through my lifetime." They describe the most important assets of a teacher as experience, communication skills, and sensitivity to other's needs. They see teaching as a creative activity requiring a variety of strategies and organization; as teamwork, and as an

occupation that is constantly changing: "Teachers must develop and refine teaching methods and techniques that both suit her personality and cater to the diverse needs of students. She must be a creative and critical thinker and flexible enough to meet the needs of students, parents, school and community alike."

Junior/Intermediate Responses

> Adolescents require a facilitator, and a friend, to help them through this transitional time. Grades four through ten are important developmental years--where students must gain an interest in learning and applying skills in educational, social and recreational areas.
>
> The key to excellence in teaching is an acceptance and understanding of all children and their individual needs and differences. The difficulties of students need to be addressed before they become significant.
>
> An average teacher can teach subjects--a great teacher realizes that knowledge is necessary for survival, but in the process can also teach a "secondary curriculum" which is essential in changing children into adults who will make a positive contribution to the world. The secondary curriculum is a responsibility for self, care for the environment and ability to problem solve. Being a teacher is my way of making a difference.
>
> I am resourceful and creative. I have always had many hobbies. I have a broad liberal education which is essential in this day. Furthermore, I am adaptable to changes and conscious of the need to recognize and explore the changing world around us. I would like to encourage children to develop their own life skills.
>
> I have a personal commitment to continually seek opportunities for personal and professional growth, to rejoice in the accomplishments of others, to contribute to society as well as to nurture, relate to and explore with others.

Applicants to the junior/intermediate program have approximately the same number of females to males as in the primary sample (39 females to 12 males in the 20% sample). As a group, however, they are slightly older and more diverse in experience and background than the primary applicants.

In age, the majority represented in this sample are in their twenties (34), 12 are in their thirties, and 5 in their forties. One is of Native background; 2 are from countries other than Canada. A variety of professions were mentioned as work prior to entrance to teaching, including that of veterinarian, public health nurse, insurance, social work, paraprofessional work with the mentally handicapped, artist, musician, lawyer, film production, construction and steel trades.

Different from the primary applicants, this group emphasized the importance and challenge of working with adolescents in their statements. They felt that they had personal qualities or experience to offer children of this age. Sometimes this involved their expertise in subject areas, but more often seemed to stem from a personal interest with children of this age and the feeling that they had something to offer them on a personal level. They emphasized their ability to be role models to this age group, and also their ability to involve students in experiences that would broaden their understanding of the world and their role in it: "Learning come from both inside and outside the classroom."

This is a challenging age group: It is not surprising that the theme of most frequent mention in the group of junior/intermediate applicants is that of the uniqueness of this time of life, time time when students need to be supported in special ways and self confidence developed. Applicants described students in these years as in need of special attention and as a challenge to teachers, in part due to the influence of peer pressures and physical growth: "I want to help stop the 'revolving door syndrome"--through education and preventative care." "I want to work with students in the formative years, to help shape their critical thinking skills so that they can become productive and confident adults."

I want to make a difference to children and future society: The theme of next frequency is that of wanting to make a difference to the youth of tomorrow and the world: teaching as a social responsibility. Here applicants expressed the desire to influence the future through "shaping young minds." and "being part of a community where adults and children are working toward a common goal, that of developing skills and attitudes to encourage each child's growth. My first responsibility is always to the children in my class and their role in the school community." "The goal of education is to prepare students for life, to produce responsible, well adjusted, effective, functioning members of society."

I always wanted to be a teacher, it allows for mutual growth and a sense of personal satisfaction: The next three themes in the J/I applicant responses concern their personal reasons for wanting to be a teacher: that it is a vocation; that they enjoy kids; that they have a lot to offer the teaching profession; and that teaching offers them an opportunity for personal growth and development. They also describe teaching as rewarding to both student and teacher, with student success in particular as the impetus for personal satisfaction in teaching: "I want to teach because I will obtain a vast amount of satisfaction from witnessing the personal growth and development of each individual student in the classroom." "I love seeing students learn and progress. I like being part of that--being able

to meet the needs of students is very rewarding." "Teaching for me in another form of learning. Teaching allows me to use a broad range of skills; to transfer joy and understanding of the subject; finally teaching allows me to actually make a difference in someone's life."

My ability to create a positive environment and my subject area knowledge can help students: The next set of comments in frequency of mention involves the role of teachers in demonstrating an enthusiasm for learning and in creating an environment conducive to learning. Applicants also mention their commitment to their subject interest and how this subject can contribute to the growth and development of their students: "Art can help with social and personal development. It helps students channel energy productively."

Teachers are important models: Last on the J/I list of frequent responses are those related to the importance of models. It is possible that this is in itself a theme throughout given J/I applicants' initial emphasis on personal involvement with students during this stage of their lives. However, specific mention of the important of models, both themselves as a model and the role of former teachers or relatives as models for teaching in their lives, comes less frequently than other comments. Applicants mention the importance of teachers in the lives of students given the breakdown of family systems. They also describe how they want to "give back" what their teachers gave to them: "I am inspired by an outstanding teacher I had. This teacher peaked the class' interest, making us want to learn. She made each student feel important, had a good sense of humor, communication skills, was organized, devoted and patient. She spent time with students. She helped me. This makes me want to repay the system that was so fruitful to myself."

Intermediate/senior Responses

> Teaching is a relationship; people relate to other people, not to subjects or rules or institutions. In other words the key to unlocking the educational potential of any person is a sound human relationship. The students in the classroom today represent the future and how they are taught affects our society. I would like an opportunity to touch the future.
>
> The educational process is more than just molding young minds. Likewise, the teaching profession is more than just a secure job. Teachers must continue to learn from their students, adapting and modifying methodology to facilitate the learning process. A teacher should demonstrate how to learn not what to learn; be a cooperative partner.

> The quality of the teacher-learner relationship is essential--the interdependence, the good and the bad, the work and the play--we both must enjoy the learning process and the personal satisfaction that can follow. Isn't that what teaching is about?
>
> The role of the teacher is two-fold--as a facilitator of the learning process and as a source of guidance--and these go hand in hand. Through the teaching process, teachers gain the respect, trust and comraderie of the students. This permits the teacher to assume a role beyond that of simply the educator, but as an experience reference person, with guidance and advice to offer.
>
> Concerning my personal characteristics, I believe I have the patience that is needed to overcome the challenges that teachers come across daily. I also have good communication skills and work well with others. When I find myself in a situation where interests conflict, I use the utmost discretion to resolve it. Finally, I am very approachable, which I think is an important attribute, because students should feel comfortable speaking to their teacher.
>
> I want to be a teacher to see the gleam of understanding and desire to know more appear in a student's eye.

The applicants to the Intermediate/senior program showed the most diversity of any of the program groups. First, there are slightly more males than female applicants in the sample group (49 males, 46 females), and the group is slightly older than the primary or intermediate applicants. Secondly, applicants cited nine different countries of origin, and a variety of professional experiences, including coaching, music, professional writing, self-employment and consulting, medicine, counseling, prison work, acting, engineering, accounting, archeology, biology, religious life, newspaper work, and private pilot to name a few. Many listed travel and teaching in other countries on a temporary basis, either as a member of organizations like CUSO or in other capacities. The secondary sample also includes four PhDs, 2 MBAs and 4 pastors or priests. Compared to the primary applicants who have more experience in the "helping" fields, the secondary sample includes more people with business related experience.

Teaching is a partnership with students; teachers are important models to students: By far the strongest theme in the intermediate/senior applicants is that of developing relationships with students and their capacity as positive adult models for students. In this they also mention the role of former models in their own lives. They see the learning process at this level as an exchange relationship whereby their own experiences have the capacity to provide inspiration to students when they are match to students' own interests and needs: "learning is an exchange in which the teacher is not only a source of knowledge, but someone who will listen to what students have to say and incorporate this into useful

learning experiences." "To me teaching is not just a job. It is a means of passing information from generation to generation. Without this there would be no progress." " I am looking for opportunities to refine my own knowledge and skills through working with students and the content of my courses. In my work I want to allow students to find parallels in their own experience."

I like sharing knowledge; student success provides a sense of accomplishment to me: The next set of themes for this group involved sharing knowledge and subject skills and developing a sense of accomplishment through seeing students succeed. In this success, they feel they are contributing to developing the adults of the future: "In order to cope with the rapidity and complexity of changes in the future, students need to be motivated to see learning as a life long process and be prepared to meet challenges with well developed problem solving thinking and analytical skills." "I have a deep love of knowledge, an enthusiasm for the communication of ideas and concepts and a strong wish to serve in some way to foster in our young people a sense of their own worth and dignity and a respect for the dignity of others. We all share the same fragile environment and need to learn to cooperate if we are to survive. Cooperation and interdependence begin "at home" on a personal level and extend through the school to the local, national and international community." "I gain great satisfaction from knowing my efforts have improved their lives. As a teacher, I think it is important to be aware of certain problems that exist--like drug use--and try to steer students away by increasing their self-confidence and positive outlook."

Teaching is my duty to society; it is hard work: The final set of I/S themes views teaching as a personal responsibility to society, as a social responsibility. Within this applicants commented on the hard work of teaching and the need to provide a positive learning environment for students in the face of other influencing factors: ""Motivating students requires flexibility and working with individual needs and interests. Teaching can be hectic but it is never boring." Teaching is challenging--a profession that requires time and knowledge but also patience, sensitivity, understanding and flexibility. Teachers must create an atmosphere and opportunities to enhance learning and allow students to take risks." "It takes a great deal of work to be a successful teacher." "Teaching supplies the necessary building blocks to the betterment of society and I want to share in this essential purpose."

Total Sample - 203/20% of larger sample

	Responses to "Why I want to be a Teacher"		
	PRIMARY - P/J	**J/I**	**SECONDARY - I/S**
Total Sample *Female/Male Ratio* *Other Nationalities*	57 46F/11M 1	51 39F/12M 2	95 46F/49M 9 countries (more diversity/older)
#1	I want to make a difference to students and the future.	Students need special attention at this point in their lives. Challenging age group.	Teaching is an exchange, a partnership with students.
#2	Teaching allows for mutual growth and continuous learning.	I want to make a difference/social responsibility.	Models - Teachers are role models for students.
#3	The goal of teaching is to develop student self esteem and the ability to contribute to society.	I always wanted to be a teacher; I enjoy kids.	Models - Models of teachers in the past are inspiration; influenced me greatly.
#4	The responsibility of teachers is to provide a safe, stimulating learning environment for students.	Teaching allows for mutual growth and development (students and teacher).	I like teaching and sharing knowledge (teacher-centered process) and subject skills.
#5	Models - Teacher's play an important role in today's society.	Teaching provides sense of accomplishment (student success).	Teaching provides a sense of accomplishment (student success).
#6	Models - Inspired by teachers in the past.	Teachers need to demomstrate and create positive learning environments.	I want to help students become contributing adults for future society.
#7	Primary years important to setting attitudes to learning.	I like the subject I teach. I feel it can help students.	I like working with and helping students/building self esteem.
#8	Teachers play a role in fostering respect for diversity.	Models - Teachers play an important role in today's society.	Teaching is my duty to society - social responsibility.
#9	Desire to share knowledge and personal experience.	Models - Inspired by teachers in the past.	Realistic view of teaching; hard work.
#10	Qualities/view of teaching. I like kids.	Realistic view of teaching.	Teachers need to provide positive learning environment for students.

Themes listed in order of frequency of mention by program

Commonalities and comparison of responses by program

Simplistically put, applicants to the Primary/junior program emphasized their sense of caring and recognition of the their responsibility at this level for laying the foundation for learning in later years. In this their comments are more "student centered" and view the goal of teaching as that of developing student self-esteem and capacity for learning through the provision of a safe, stimulating learning environment. In contrast, applicants to the Junior/intermediate level emphasized the challenge of this age group and their own capacities to work with children of this age. Intermediate/senior applicants took this further in emphasizing their role as a model and facilitator of student interests, given what subject or life experiences they had to offer students. Secondary comments tend to be more "teacher centered" in tone--they have a strong desire to communicate about what they know and what they have experienced but recognize that this must be an exchange with students so that the information becomes relevant to the student's own life and experience.

All groups comment on their social responsibility as teachers, on the fact that teaching is an important profession to the development of productive and healthy adults that can contribute to society and to themselves. In this, all applicants "want to make a difference." All talk about a major goal of teaching as being the facilitation of the development of student self-esteem and capacity to be flexible in the face of a changing society. They see life for students as increasingly diverse and complicated on numerous levels--personal, societal, environmental, familial, and through exposure to negative influences such as drugs--more so than it was in the past. They see their role in part as preparing students to cope with these pressures, even to the point of performing a guidance or parental role as necessary. All groups also mention the influence of former teachers in their own personal lives, though the secondary group places more emphasis on this than the primary, perhaps because they also see themselves in the role of personal models for students.

Applicants also mentioned their love or personal interest in the subject they taught, especially at the Intermediate/senior level, and talked about their personal aptitude for teaching--they are good communicators; people always told them they should be a teacher; they always wanted to be a teacher; they see teaching as an important profession to making a difference in the world. This discussion of teaching as a "calling" did not occur in the same way at the primary--primary talked more about the teaching process, less about themselves, but it was a strong theme across all program groups.

Despite some differences in emphasis across programs, there are numerous similarities in the reasons given for entering the profession when the sample is taken as a whole. As described above, all program groups mention the fact that they are involved in teaching because they want to make a difference to society in some way. All talk about teachers playing a major role in the healthy development of students so that these students can become productive members of society. All mention the importance of teachers as role models, especially as students increase in age, and frequently mention the influence of one or more of their former teachers as a model for their lives, or as influencing their choice of profession.

The following lists themes of most frequent mention across all programs:

1) I want to make a difference to students and society. I want to help develop strong, self confident, responsible adults who can give something back to society.

2) Teachers are important role models for students, especially with weakening family units and working parents.

3) The teacher-student exchange is one of mutual growth and continuous learning for both. I gain satisfaction from this exchange and from student success.

4) I want to share my personal knowledge and expertise. I feel I can be a good teacher. I have something to offer students. I recognize that teaching is a complicated and taxing profession. I like kids.

5) It is the responsibility of teachers to create positive learning environments and experiences and to lay the foundation for future learning, or a positive attitude about learning.

Figure 1 shows theme areas by program and frequency of mention within programs. Differences in emphasis by program area can be seen in the relative placement of themes related to modeling, to providing positive learning environments, and to the sharing of expertise, experience and knowledge.

Implications and questions for Program planning

Even at first glance, the responses of these beginning teachers raise some interesting questions to consider in terms of planning for teacher education programs. First of all, it must be said that these individuals were selected by representatives of different programs who were looking for different things. The Primary staff is interested in child-centered

approaches and the Secondary in subject specialization. The selection of applicants to some degree reflects these interests. That aside, one important question to come from a review of applicants involves the issue of how individuals who self select for different programs perceive their role, i.e. as a facilitator of growth, or as a model and subject specialist, and what any Faculty of Education is doing to contribute to an understanding of both aspects across programs. Are there competencies, i.e. related to facilitating growth, etc., that corss programs? If secondary applicants describe developing a relationship with students as an important goal to the effective communication of information, how is this being approached in teacher education courses at the secondary level?

Related to this is the question of the stereotypes present in the themes--elementary teachers see themselves as having more of a "parent" role; secondary teachers see themselves more as "experts" in subject areas. What do these stereotypes say about what individuals in different programs do and how they do it? It would seem that some ground has been gained as to the general goals of teaching in the emphasis on social responsibility and making a difference, but perception of approach to these goals still seems burdened by traditional structures and traditional views of what teachers at different levels should be like. This becomes an argument for exploration of alternative modes of presentation of material, especially at the junior and secondary level, whereby teacher candidates might have more experience with different delivery systems and their effects, i.e. where their self-perceptions of role are opened up to different approaches.

Finally, if individuals applying to the teaching profession are taking on the large task of "making a difference to students and the future," what concretely are institutions of teacher learning and teacher development doing to support such a goal, starting with an interpretation of what it might mean in terms of knowledge and skills. Certainly these applicants feel that they have something to offer the task. They consistently describe teaching as a process of "continuing to learn" for themselves and their students. If the structures of school life and educational training are too narrowly conceived; if the life of teachers only involves a personal relationship with students and perhaps with subjects and not the larger society, which includes the conditions that surround teaching and teachers' capacity to engage with and be flexible in the face of changing needs, how can teachers really make a difference except to individual students here and there? Granted most of these applicants might say that is enough, but the question remains, can it be more?

The responses of these applicants indicate a great optimism about the potential of teaching. Experience with new teachers in the field indicate that this optimism is often diffused in the face of the structural realities of schools and the workload of a teacher's life. In order for new teachers to be able to "make a difference" a new paradigm is necessary. As expressed by Fullan (1992), new teachers need to develop a sense of "personal vision, inquiry, mastery, and collaboration. Each of these has its institutional counterpart: shared vision-building, organizational structures, norms and practices of inquiry, focus on organizational development and know-how, and collaborative work cultures." If beginning teachers describe these elements in their work with students, it would seem that institutions of teacher education might apply some of the same criteria in examining what they are offering teacher applicants in preparing them for making a difference to schools, students and themselves.

Discussion

This review provides one qualitative snap-shot of a group of applicants to the teaching profession. In doing so, it presents a different perspective of why individuals enter the teaching profession, at least in terms of what they say about it. Brookhart and Freeman's summary of 44 studies on the characteristics of entering teacher candidates (1992) support a number of the group characteristics described here: entering teacher candidates are typically White and female with a higher percentage of males in the secondary level; that candidates to teaching report a high level of involvement with community, extracurricular and school spirit activities, especially as they include interactions with children. In the case of the University of Toronto, however, this is also an expressed requirement in the Faculty of Education's experience profile for applicants.

More importantly, these studies describe a consistent pattern for altruistic and service-oriented goals as sources of motivation for entering teacher candidates as well a difference in motivation according to level: entering teacher candidates were more child centered in their motivation at the elementary level whereas secondary candidates were more likely than elementary to cite the influence of a former teacher (Brookhart and Freeman, 1992: 47). They also describe the early feelings of confidence in entering teacher candidates as well as their sense of optimism, a confidence that often seems at odds with the anxiety common to new teachers when faced with real classrooms. Brookhart and Freeman conclude (1992: 51):

> Two themes emerge from these studies. Entering teacher candidates view the nurturing and interpersonal aspects of a teacher's role as more important than the academic aspects and entering teacher candidates view teaching as dispensing information. There is contradictory evidence about changes in beliefs about teaching during the course of teacher education.

They also suggest that further research with entering teachers 1) needs to investigate the relations between orientations to teaching, learning to teach and classroom performance and 2) needs to examine the issue of whether or not appropriate orientations to teaching can be modified during teacher education and, if so, how (Brookhart and Freeman, 1992: 56)? These same questions are presented in the discussion of program planning presented earlier.

Another consideration of this kind of data is presented by Stark (1991) who describes teachers' emphasis on caring as the foundation for a pedagogical process: "a way of observing, listening, and relating to children. It is a way of being-in-the-world with children" (1991: 306). She asks the question of whether teacher education programs help student teachers apply this interest, or whether instead they provide new teachers with experiences of teaching orientated to "doing" rather than "being." Abstract as this sounds, it relates to many of these applicants expressed interests--how do they maintain a caring relationship with students and still approach the content that must be covered? How-to "doing" is one important element of teaching, but also one that too easily falls prey to the "quick-fix" element of society. It would seem that the emphasis should be on developing the new teacher's capacity for actualizing and acting on "self" with all the skills that Fullan (1992) suggests. If the individual is not to fall prey to the system, that individual needs to understand both the system and themselves and have the capacity to act on both. In terms of reflection for teacher education facilities, understanding how to develop that capacity requires the same initiative--how is the organization structured? What is the organizational self? How is it developing these capacities in others?

Moral Imperatives and Making a Difference

Goodlad (1990) aptly describes the dilemma of teaching as an occupation, or a profession, where society, including the society of the school, conspires to alternately value and devalue teachers and what they do. He says: "The primary responsibility of a teacher, technically and morally, is to the students being taught. Teacher education, first and foremost, must prepare teachers to assume this responsibility" and " there has been much talk recently of the need to create a 'true' profession of teaching--talk seemingly based on

the premise that creating such a profession will lead to better schools" (1990: 12-14). At the same time, "parents and professors advise their children and brightest students not to become teachers. At dances and social gatherings, young teachers often lie about their occupations" (Goodlad, 1990: 15). In his interviews with students in teacher education programs, it became clear that to these students the idea of teaching as an almost idealistic "calling' was not so far afield from the truth. "Teaching kids is important, somebody has to do it," they said.

Teacher education, as Fullan states, "has the honour of being the best solution and the worst problem in education today. Despite the rhetoric, society has not yet seriously tried to use teacher education as a tool for improvement. Underneath the rhetoric there does not seem to be a real belief or confidence that investing in teacher education will yield results" (1992). Understanding the role of teaching in today's society and how that role must be actualized to have the effects necessary requires another look at what teaching is and what it can do. Goodlad and his colleagues describe the deeper purposes of education and teaching as related to "moral imperatives": schools are specifically charged with enculturating the young into a political democracy; schools are specifically charged with providing a disciplined encounter with the knowledge necessary to continue society; teaching must combine generalizable principles of teaching, subject-specific instruction, and sensitivity to human qualities and potentials--all going beyond the "mechanics" of teaching--for the lives of teachers and their students intersect; and schools and teachers must be good stewards--purposefully engaged in being responsive and renewing (Goodlad, 1990, 20-27).

Goodlad's statements reflect the deeper changes affecting today's society. They also reflect the need to develop teachers and teacher structures that can be responsive to those changes in ways that current conventions and institutions do not. Fullan (1992) and Sirotnik (in Goodlad, 1990) further define the qualities needed in the teaching profession; commitment to inquiry, knowledge, competence, caring, freedom, well-being, and social justice. Fullan (1992) narrows these to core capacities that build in teachers and teacher institutions greater change capacity, or "Change agentry":

> I define change agentry as being self-conscious about the nature of change and the change process, as being appreciative of its semi-unpredictable and volatile character, and as explicitly being concerned with the pursuit of ideas and competencies for coping with and influencing more and more aspects of the process toward some desired set of ends.

If schools and teachers have a moral responsibility to students and society; if teachers coming into the profession see it as a "calling" or vocation and "want to make a difference" however idealistic their statements might be at this point in their career, how can this energy and idealism be maintained when too often the reality of teaching as it now stands mediates against this expressed sense of moral purpose? It would seem clear that new teachers needs for "doing" are necessary but secondary to the more important purpose and meaning inherent in broader competencies. Teachers are not there just to address the curriculum but rather to work with students and other teachers to create a better future.
As teacher educators, we might take on the same purpose and ask ourselves the same question, "how"?

Conclusion

This review provides one portrait of a group of applicants to the teaching profession. If the larger studies of teaching are calling for different qualities and abilities in teachers, abilities that better address the needs of a changing society, or that ask teachers themselves to be agents of social change, we need to know if we are getting individuals with that potential. It would appear from these statements that at least at this point in their career, new teachers are optimistic and interested in making a difference, to themselves, their students and society. The idealism expressed at this stage, however, does not guarantee that they will be able to act on their goals in the classroom--that is a factor of both training and contextual situations, but it does allow the University of Toronto, Faculty of Education a sense of where they want to go. Further, it acts as a kind of "reality check" on the relationship between new teachers, the teacher training setting, and their sense of the needs of the world at large.

Taken overall, there are many stimulating and thought-provoking statements made by these applicants seeking to enter the teaching profession. What holds true for them applies to teaching at the Faculty as well. As a community of learners as well as teachers, approaching the question of "how to make a difference" should provide an exciting challenge. As one applicant stated:

> Learning is not a means to oppress or impress others, but instead is a process whereby individuals extend their relatedness, their connectedness to themselves, others and the world. Teaching is a reciprocal process whereby teachers and students create significant educational experiences.

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1) I want to make a difference to students and society. I want to help develop strong, self confident, responsible adults who can give something back to society.

2) Teachers are important role models for students, especially with weakening family units and working parents.

3) The teacher-student exchange is one of mutual growth and continuous learning for both. I gain satisfaction from this exchange and from student success.

4) I want to share my personal knowledge and expertise. I feel I can be a good teacher. I have something to offer students. I recognize that teaching is a complicated and taxing profession. I like kids.

5) It is the responsibility of teachers to create positive learning environments and experiences and to lay the foundation for future learning, or a positive attitude about learning.

Primary

I want to make a difference. Teaching allows for mutual growth. It is the responsibility of the primary years to lay the foundation for later learning.

Junior/Intermediate

Adolescents need special attention and are challenging. I believe I have the characteristics to help these kids. I want to make a difference to them.

Secondary

Teaching is a relationship, an exchange. Students at this age need good models. I like sharing my knowledge and experience.